

UPI084

ADD 3 ALERT, WASHINGTON

GERALD WARREN, DEPUTY WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY, SAID THE PRESIDENT BELIEVED THAT THE MAJOR POWERS SHOULD BE EXCLUDED FROM ANY OBSERVER TEAM BUT SAID THE UNITED STATES WAS WILLING TO PARTICIPATE IF REQUESTED BY SECRETARY GENERAL KURT WALDHEIM.

SCHLESINGER SAID THE ALERT APPLIED TO ALL 2.3 MILLION AMERICAN MILITARY PERSONNEL THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. HE SAID THE UNITS TAKEN OFF ALERT TODAY TOTALED 36,000 PERSONNEL.

SCHLESINGER TOLD REPORTERS AT THE PENTAGON THAT AS A RESULT OF THE APPARENTLY EASING SITUATION, THE U.S. SOUTHERN COMMAND -- WHICH EMBRACES CENTRAL AND SOUTH AMERICA -- AND THE ALASKA COMMAND HAD BEEN RETURNED TO NORMAL READINESS.

HE SAID THE REMAINING U.S. FORCES WOULD BE TAKEN OFF ALERT STATUS AS SOVIET ACTIONS BECAME MORE CLEAR.

"WE DO NOT KNOW AT THIS STAGE WHETHER THE SOVIETS HAVE REDUCED THEIR (AIRBORNE FORCES) ALERT STATUS," SCHLESINGER SAID. "WE ARE CAREFULLY WATCHING THEIR ALERT STATUS AND ARE ADJUSTING (THE SCOPE OF THE U.S. ALERT) DOWNWARD AS THE CIRCUMSTANCES WARRANT.

"IT IS EASIER TO DETERMINE WHEN FORCES HAVE BEEN PUT ON ALERT THAN TO TELL WHEN THAT ALERT IS RELAXED."

SCHLESINGER SAID THE SOVIET ALERT HAD BEEN IN EFFECT "FOR SEVERAL DAYS".

HE INDICATED THE U.S. ALERT WAS TRIGGERED BY A COMBINATION OF FACTORS:

- THE SOVIET ALERT.
- THE APPARENT SUDDEN PREPARATION TUESDAY OF RUSSIAN TRANSPORT AIRCRAFT TO CARRY TROOPS.
- A RESUMPTION OF ACTIVITY BY THOSE AIRCRAFT.
- A NOTE DELIVERED THROUGH DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS WARNING OF THE POSSIBILITY OF SOVIET TROOPS GOING TO THE MIDDLE EAST.

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ADD 4 ALERT, WASHINGTON WARREN MADE HIS REMARKS ABOUT POSSIBLE U.S. PARTICIPATION IN A U.N. OBSERVER FORCE AFTER SOVIET LEADER LEONID BREZHNEV ANNOUNCED IN MOSCOW THAT THE RUSSIANS WERE SENDING "REPRESENTATIVES" TO THE AREA.

WARREN DECLINED TO SAY WHETHER IT WAS U.S. UNDERSTANDING THAT THESE "REPRESENTATIVES" WERE OBSERVERS OR INTENDED TO PARTICIPATE IN A PEACEKEEPING FORCE.

WARREN ALSO DECLINED TO SAY WHETHER THE UNITED STATES OBJECTED TO THE SOVIET MOVE. "WE HOPE THAT AS U.N. PERSONNEL TAKE UP THEIR POSITION, THE CEASE-FIRE WILL BE OBSERVED BY ALL PARTIES," HE SAID.

AS FOR THE CRISIS ATMOSPHERE THAT PREVAILED THURSDAY, SCHLESINGER SAID: "WE WERE VERY FAR AWAY FROM A CONFRONTATION, MILITARY CONFRONTATION. WE WERE TAKING THE ACTIONS NECESSARY TO PRECLUDE A MILITARY CONFRONTATION."

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